

distorting or flexing the interior surface 40 of the sanitary cove base, which leads to a potentially more aesthetic installation and helps to prevent undue stressing of the interior surface of the sanitary cove base.

As clearly shown in FIG. 18, a section of adhesive ridges 26 is present on the wall-facing surface of the sanitary cove base at both locations where the screws pass through the outer wall of the sanitary cove base. This again permits the installer to appropriately tighten the screws 52 without inappropriately distorting the sanitary cove base. In order to ensure that the screws are threaded through the sanitary cove base at the proper locations (i.e., so as to pass through the center of either the upper, small hollow channel 30 or the center of the lower, small hollow channel 50), the interior surface 40 of the sanitary cove base may be appropriately marked. For example, a screw placement indentation or line may be placed on the interior surface at the location where the screws are to be inserted through the sanitary cove base. Alternatively, a chalk line may be snapped onto the interior surface of the sanitary cove base and then removed after the screws have been installed.

As also clearly shown in FIG. 18, the chamfer 38 creates a relief region 128 at the juncture of the wall 54 and the subfloor 130. This relief region 128 makes it easier to install the sanitary cove base despite slight irregularities in the juncture between the wall and the subfloor, and also reduces room preparation time and thereby facilitates installation of a sanitary cove base since a small amount of debris may remain without interfering with the installation of the sanitary cove base according to the present invention. In the configuration depicted in FIG. 18, floor tiles 132 (e.g., ceramic or clay tiles) have been installed on the upper surface of the subfloor 130. The flooring material abutment surface 34 of the sanitary cove base is designed to flowingly meet with the edges of, for example, the clay tiles as shown in FIG. 18. A caulking compound or grout or adhesive may be placed in the gaps between the tiles and the gap between the flooring material abutment surface and the tiles affixed to the subfloor adjacent to the flooring material abutment surface of the sanitary cove base.

FIG. 19 is similar to FIG. 18, but is an enlarged, fragmentary, cross-sectional view of a fourth alternative embodiment of the sanitary cove base 10⁰⁰ according to the present invention. As with the embodiment depicted in FIG. 18, in the embodiment depicted in FIGS. 19 and 20, screws 52 are again used to hold the sanitary cove base 10⁰⁰ snugly against the structural wall 54. In the embodiment depicted in FIGS. 19 and 20, screw insertion holes 134 have been drilled through the inner wall 14. Preferably, these screw insertion holes are centered over either the upper, small hollow channel 48 or the lower, small hollow channel 50. These screw insertion holes 134 may be, for example, one-half inch holes through which the heads of the screws 52 may freely travel. As clearly depicted in FIGS. 19 and 20, once the attachment screws 52 are in place and snug against the inner surface of the outer wall 12, buttons 136 may be used to plug the screw insertion holes 134. The perimeter or circumference of each button 136 may, for example, be configured to snap into one of the screw insertion holes 134, resulting in the top surface 138 of the buttons 136 be flush with the interior surface 40 of the inner wall 14. These buttons provide a more aesthetic or finished appearance to the installed sanitary cove base 10⁰⁰, yet permit the use of attachment screws 52 to securely hold the sanitary cove base against the structural wall 54. Also, when the heads of the screws 52 are snug against the inner surface of the outer

wall 12 rather than against the interior surface 40 of the inner wall 14, undesirable distortion of the inner wall 14 is reduced or eliminated.

FIG. 21 depicts two walls of a room having sanitary cove base according to the present invention installed along the lower edges of the walls 54. As shown schematically in FIG. 21, the number of joints between pieces of cove base has been minimized to reduce the number of paths for moisture to escape from the interior surface of the cove base to the wall-facing surface of the cove base. By reducing the potential path for undesirable moisture seepage, a longer-lasting installation may be achieved. FIG. 21 also depicts use of a miter joint 118 (FIG. 16).

This invention minimizes the number of baseboard joints. Further, the sanitary cove base may be constructed from a material that resists mold and rotting, and which is highly resistant to damage from, for example, cut or palate jack impact. Although a number of embodiments of this invention have been described above with a certain degree of particularity, those skilled in the art could make numerous alterations to the disclosed embodiments without departing from the spirit or scope of this invention. For example, as suggested above in connection with FIGS. 8-10, the slope of the top surface and the particular configuration of the transition from the top surface to the interior surface of the sanitary cove base may be adjusted to suit a particular situation. All directional references (e.g., upper, lower, upward, downward, left, right, leftward, rightward, top, bottom, above, below, vertical, and horizontal) are only used for identification purposes to aid the readers' understanding of the present invention and do not create limitations, particularly as to the position, orientation, or use of the invention. It is intended that all matter contained in the above description or shown in the accompanying drawings shall be interpreted as illustrative and not limiting. Changes in detail or structure may be made without departing from the spirit of the invention as defined in the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A sanitary cove base comprising the following:

- an outer wall; said outer wall having a plurality of sections of adhesive ridges; and a plurality of relief valleys, wherein each section of adhesive ridges of said plurality of sections of adhesive ridges is separated from a next adjacent section of adhesive ridges of said plurality of sections of adhesive ridges by a relief valley of said plurality of relief valleys; said outer wall having a plurality of sections of adhesive ridges, and a plurality of relief valleys, wherein each section of adhesive ridges of said plurality of sections of adhesive ridges is separated from a next adjacent section of adhesive ridges of said plurality of sections of adhesive ridges by a relief valley of said plurality of relief valleys;
- an inner wall having an interior surface, wherein said interior surface comprises a sanitary sweep and an abutment surface adapted to abut adjacent flooring;
- a plurality of longitudinally-extending web members existing between said outer wall and said inner wall, thereby connecting said outer wall to said inner wall;
- a plurality of hollow channels, each hollow channel being defined between said inner wall, said outer wall, a first longitudinally-extending web member of said plurality of longitudinally-extending web members, and a next adjacent longitudinally-extending web member of said plurality of longitudinally-extending web members.

a top wall;
 a sweep wall, said sweep wall having a curve portion;
 having a curved portion;
 a floor wall;
 a bottom wall; and
 a chamfer wall.

2. The sanitary cove base of claim 1, wherein said top wall, said inner wall, said sweep wall, said floor wall, said bottom wall, said chamfer wall, and said outer wall are all approximately 0.125 inches thick.

3. The sanitary cove base of claim 1, wherein said chamfer wall is adapted to form a relief region at a juncture of an adjacent wall and subfloor where the sanitary cove base is installed.

4. A sanitary cove base comprising the following:

an outer wall; said outer wall having a plurality of sections of adhesive ridges; and a plurality of relief valleys, wherein each section of adhesive ridges of said plurality of sections of adhesive ridges is separated from a next adjacent section of adhesive ridges of said plurality of sections of adhesive ridges by a relief valley of said plurality of relief valleys; said outer wall having a plurality of sections of adhesive ridges, and a plurality of relief valleys, wherein each section of adhesive ridges of said plurality of sections of adhesive ridges is separated from a next adjacent section of adhesive ridges of said plurality of sections of adhesive ridges by a relief valley of said plurality of relief valleys;

an inner wall having an interior surface, wherein said interior surface comprises a sanitary sweep and an abutment surface adapted to abut adjacent flooring;

a plurality of longitudinally-extending web members existing between said outer wall and said inner wall, thereby connecting said outer wall to said inner wall;

a plurality of hollow channels, each hollow channel being defined between

said inner wall,

said outer wall,

a first longitudinally-extending web member of said plurality of longitudinally-extending web members, and a next adjacent longitudinally-extending web member of said plurality of longitudinally-extending web members;

a lower end, wherein a large, lower channel extends through said lower end; and

a vertical portion, wherein said vertical portion comprises a plurality of hollow channels, and wherein said plurality of hollow channels comprises

a top hollow channel;

a second hollow channel, said second hollow channel located below said top hollow channel;

a third hollow channel, said third hollow channel located below said second hollow channel;

a fourth hollow channel, said fourth hollow channel located below said third hollow channel;

a fifth hollow channel, said fifth hollow channel located below said fourth hollow channel;

a sixth hollow channel, said sixth hollow channel located below said fifth hollow channel;

a seventh hollow channel, said seventh hollow channel located below said sixth hollow channel;

an eighth hollow channel, said eighth hollow channel located below said seventh hollow channel; and

a ninth hollow channel, said ninth hollow channel located below said eighth hollow channel and above said large, lower channel.

5. The sanitary cove base of claim 4, wherein said third hollow channel is an upper, small hollow channel; wherein said eighth hollow channel is a lower, small hollow channel; and wherein said upper, small hollow channel and said lower, small hollow channel are shorter than each of said top hollow channel, said second hollow channel, said fourth hollow channel, said fifth hollow channel, said sixth hollow channel, said seventh hollow channel, and said ninth hollow channel.

6. The sanitary cove base of claim 5, wherein said upper, small hollow channel and said lower, small hollow channel are each adapted to receive an attachment screw.

7. The sanitary cove base of claim 4, wherein

said top hollow channel is approximately 0.636 inches high vertically;

said second hollow channel is approximately 0.942 inches high vertically;

said third hollow channel is approximately 0.404 inches high vertically;

said fourth hollow channel is approximately 0.754 inches tall vertically;

said fifth hollow channel is approximately 0.923 inches tall vertically;

said sixth hollow channel is approximately 0.861 inches tall vertically;

said seventh hollow channel is approximately 0.504 inches tall vertically;

said eighth hollow channel is approximately 0.404 inches tall vertically;

said ninth hollow channel is approximately 0.817 inches tall vertically; and

said large, lower channel is approximately 0.641 inches tall vertically.

8. The sanitary cove base of claim 4, wherein each of said hollow channels is approximately 0.125 inches wide between said inner wall and said outer wall.

9. The sanitary cove base of claim 4, wherein said plurality of longitudinally-extending web members comprises nine longitudinally-extending web members that extend between said outer wall and said inner wall; and wherein each of said nine longitudinally-extending web members separates one of said top hollow channel, said second hollow channel, said third hollow channel, said fourth hollow channel, said fifth hollow channel, said sixth hollow channel, said seventh hollow channel, said eighth hollow channel, said ninth hollow channel, and said large, lower channel from a next adjacent hollow channel.

10. The sanitary cove base of claim 4, wherein each of said web members is approximately 0.096 inches thick vertically.

11. A sanitary cove base comprising the following:

an outer wall; said outer wall having a plurality of sections of adhesive ridges; and a plurality of relief valleys, wherein each section of adhesive ridges of said plurality of sections of adhesive ridges is separated from a next adjacent section of adhesive ridges of said plurality of sections of adhesive ridges by a relief valley of said plurality of relief valleys; said outer wall having a plurality of sections of adhesive ridges, and a plurality of relief valleys, wherein each section of adhesive ridges of said plurality of sections of adhesive ridges is separated from a next adjacent section of adhesive ridges of said plurality of sections of adhesive ridges by a relief valley of said plurality of relief valleys;

an inner wall having an interior surface, wherein said interior surface comprises a sanitary sweep and an abutment surface adapted to abut adjacent flooring;

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- a plurality of longitudinally-extending web members extending between said outer wall and said inner wall, thereby connecting said outer wall to said inner wall;
- a plurality of hollow channels, each hollow channel being defined between
- said inner wall,
 - said outer wall,
 - a first longitudinally-extending web member of said plurality of longitudinally-extending web members, and
 - a next adjacent longitudinally-extending web member of said plurality of longitudinally-extending web members;
- a lower end having a large, lower channel extending there-through; and
- a vertical portion, wherein said vertical portion comprises at least a first part of said outer wall;
- at least a first part of said inner wall; and
 - a plurality of hollow channels, wherein said plurality of hollow channels comprises
 - an upper, small hollow channel; and
 - a lower, small hollow channel.
12. The sanitary cove base of any one of claim 11 or 4, further comprising a chamfer adapted to form a relief region at a juncture of an adjacent wall and subfloor where the sanitary cove base is installed.
13. The sanitary cove base of claim 12, wherein the relief region is configured to facilitate installation of the sanitary cove base despite irregularities at the juncture of the adjacent wall and subfloor.
14. The sanitary cove base of claim 12, wherein the relief region is configured to reduce room preparation time and thereby facilitates installation of the sanitary cove base since a small amount of debris may remain without interfering with the installation of the sanitary cove base.
15. The sanitary cove base of any one of claim 11, 4, or 1, wherein said sanitary cove base is constructed from material selected from the group consisting of Acrylonitrile-Butadiene-Styrene, polypropylene, high-density polyethylene, and Polyvinyl Chloride.
16. The sanitary cove base of any one of claim 11, 4, or 1, wherein said sanitary cove base is made with the following composition: 98% polyethylene plastic, 1% coloring agent, ½% foaming agent, and ½% anti-fungal material.
17. The sanitary cove base of claim 16, wherein said sanitary cove base is milled from a solid block of material.
18. The sanitary cove base of claim 16, wherein said sanitary cove base is extruded.
19. The sanitary cove base of any one of claim 11, 4, or 1, wherein said abutment surface is displaced forwardly from said interior surface of said inner wall by a distance of approximately 0.500 inches.
20. The sanitary cove base of any one of claim 11, 4, or 1 further comprising
- a first plurality of screw insertion holes through said inner wall and adapted to accept an attachment screw; and
 - a second plurality of buttons, each button being frictionally received in one of said first plurality of screw insertion holes.
21. The sanitary cove base of any one of claim 11, 4, or 1, wherein the plurality of hollow channels are adapted to receive injected gas and/or cooling water during manufacturing of the cove base to facilitate more accurate and predictable

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formation of the sanitary cove base without the sanitary cove base unacceptably warping and/or distorting.

22. The sanitary cove base of any one of claim 11, 4, or 1, wherein said sanitary cove base further comprises

- a wall-facing surface of said outer wall;
- a top surface; and
- a bottom surface.

23. The sanitary cove base of claim 22, wherein said wall-facing surface of said outer wall further comprises

- a chamfer;
- a plurality of adhesive ridges;
- a plurality of relief valleys; and
- a wall-contact crest.

24. The sanitary cove base of claim 22, wherein said top surface has a width of approximately 0.438 inches, and wherein said abutment surface has a height of approximately 0.500 inches.

25. The sanitary cove base of claim 22, wherein said top surface extends horizontally between said wall-facing surface and said interior surface.

26. The sanitary cove base of claim 22, wherein said top surface extends between said wall-facing surface and said interior surface, and wherein said top surface is substantially horizontal adjacent to said wall-facing surface and is substantially vertical adjacent to said interior surface.

27. The sanitary cove base of claim 22, wherein said top surface extends between said wall-facing surface and said interior surface, and wherein said top surface slopes downwardly between said wall-facing surface and said interior surface.

28. The sanitary cove base of claim 22, wherein said top surface is curved.

29. The sanitary cove base of claim 22, wherein said top surface is flat.

30. The sanitary cove base of claim 22, wherein the sanitary cove base has an overall height from said bottom surface to said top surface of approximately 8.0 inches.

31. The sanitary cove base of claim 22 further comprising a wall-contact crest extending rearwardly from said wall-facing surface of said outer wall, wherein said plurality of relief valleys comprises an upper relief valley, wherein said plurality of sections of adhesive ridges comprises an upper section of adhesive ridges, and wherein said upper relief valley separates said upper section of adhesive ridges from said wall-contact crest.

32. The sanitary cove base of claim 31, wherein a top sidewall of said upper relief valley connects said wall-contact crest to a floor of said upper relief valley.

33. The sanitary cove base of claim 22 further comprising a wall-contact crest that extends rearwardly from said wall-facing surface of said outer wall a first distance, wherein each adhesive ridge of said plurality of sections of adhesive ridges extends rearwardly from said wall-facing surface of said outer wall a second distance, and wherein said first distance equals said second distance.

34. The sanitary cove base of claim 22, wherein each adhesive ridge within a first section of adhesive ridges is displaced from a next adjacent adhesive ridge in said first section of adhesive ridges by a distance of approximately 0.125 inches.

35. The sanitary cove base of claim 22, wherein said adhesive ridges extend rearwardly from said wall-facing surface of said outer wall approximately 0.063 inches.

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